

**WHEN DOCTORS ARE PATIENTS.** Edited by Max Pinner, M.D., and Benjamin F. Miller, M.D. W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., New York, 1952. 364 pages, \$3.95.

A doctor is first of all a person, and, it follows, a group of doctors represents a cross section of humanity. The truth of this generality is a by-product of—and perhaps the most interesting thing about—the book, “When Doctors Are Patients.”

To illustrate this truth was not the purpose of the book. The senior author presents it in “the hope that the method of inquiry will be useful in defining . . . the subjective experience of disease, and, therewith, a broader field for therapeutic activities.” From the scientific viewpoint it asks two main questions: (1) How does an individual's personality modify his disease? and (2) how does the disease modify the individual's personality? The thirty-three autobiographical sketches of disease by physicians who, themselves, have suffered give some provocative data.

To the reviewer, however, the scientific values seem comparatively insignificant compared to the human interest. The art, rather than the science of medicine predominates. Too much variation of topics, individuals, and conditions is involved to make a statistical imprint. The variation itself is impressive: one man writes a straightforward account of his experience with a serious and lethal or disabling disease, commenting on it with amazing objectivity; another writes round and round about his comparatively minor disease, rarely getting to the basic condition but allowing his imagination full sway.

The book, with its wide appeal, may be enjoyed by the layman as well as the doctor. The majority of the stories are well written. All who read it can learn from it: sick doctors—like all sick people—are often remarkably ego-centric; and, like other patients, want and appreciate a kindly interest in and something done for their symptoms. The physician may well find here the reflection of his own ailments. The experience of his colleagues seems to say, “There but for the grace of God go I.” And in this humility he may benefit.

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**THE PREVENTION OF RHEUMATIC FEVER**—Lowell A. Rantz, M.D., Associate Professor of Medicine, Stanford University School of Medicine. Charles C. Thomas, publisher, 1952. 66 pages, \$2.25.

In this volume of 59 pages Rantz gives definite information as to the etiology, epidemiology and prevention of rheumatic fever as related to the Group A hemolytic streptococci.

Clinical recognition of an invasion by the Group A hemolytic streptococci is made by three signs: (1) exudative tonsillitis, (2) marked redness and edema of the pharyngeal soft tissues, particularly the soft palate and pillars, and (3) tender anterior cervical adenitis. A direct swab taken from the pharynx by the oral approach and streaked directly on blood agar plates will give laboratory confirmation of the clinical diagnosis.

The goal of the physician is to prevent infection by hemolytic streptococci by isolation from the acutely ill and suspected carriers. If active hemolytic streptococci invasion occurs, then the prevention of rheumatic fever can be accomplished in practically every case by the multiple injection of the procaine salt of penicillin suspended in oil and aluminum monostearate so that an antistreptococcal concentration is maintained for five to seven days. This can be accomplished by 600,000 units given intramuscularly every other day for two or three doses; 200,000 units orally five times daily (1,000,000 units per day) for seven days is effective.

The monograph is clearly written and is filled with practical suggestions for the general practitioner to whom falls the duty of the prevention of rheumatic fever.

**MEDICAL BIOGRAPHIES—The Ailments of Thirty-three Famous Persons.** Philip Marshall Dale, M.D., University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, Okla., 1952. 259 pages, \$4.00.

In this volume Dr. Dale reveals a talent for the art of the short story which offers a real challenge to the most seasoned professional writer. Fascinatingly told are the vital and final episodes in the lives of 33 famous persons, many of whom were responsible for and some of whom altered the course of history and civilization. Many are included whose accomplishments in politics, literature, poetry, philosophy, military tactics, art and science were outstanding. Here is recorded and retold in pertinent clinical histories the last hours and fate of those finite lives which were entrusted with the destiny of man. Inadvertently, these histories reveal the arduous path through which the principles of clinical medicine and differential diagnosis were developed. A review of these anecdotes indicates the marvelous advances which have been made and the legacy of modern medicine. What science and research have made available to the modern physician is magnified by the appreciation of those infirmities of the great of the past who groped hopelessly and often aimlessly before the simplicity of nature's pattern in the absence of definitive diagnostic method. A fascinating book, which is highly recommended to the apprentice, the journeyman and past master, for information, inspiration, and sheer delight.

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**REACTION TO INJURY—Pathology for Students of Disease—Volume II—The Reactions of Submission and Adaptation and the Disease Entities Arising Out of Their Elaboration**—Wiley D. Forbus, M.D., Professor of Pathology, Duke University. The Williams and Wilkins Company, Baltimore, 1952. 1110 pages, 836 illustrations, 54 in color, \$20.00.

This book represents a new and interesting approach to pathology and its clinical applications. Rather than being a rigid and formal presentation of gross and microscopic pathology, with emphasis on cellular details, it is a dynamic approach to the use of pathology in correlating function with organ alterations in disease. Disease is interpreted from the initial viewpoint of relevant facts in biochemistry, anatomy, and physiology, etiological factors are discussed, and the consequences in terms of function and altered tissue structure are elaborated. It is, therefore, a type of book which can serve as a text in pathology, fundamental clinical medicine, or pathological physiology.

The material covered in this volume deals with disturbances in metabolism, vitamin deficiencies, blood dyscrasias, endocrine imbalances, congenital dysplasias, and disturbances in growth and development. Functional and structural adaptation to diseases in the circulatory system, lungs, and viscera are discussed. The central nervous system is very briefly covered.

The book is bulky and expensive, but considering its value both as a pathology text, an interpretive correlation of clinical medicine and pathological physiology, and its delightfully stimulating approach to disease it is fully worth the cost.

Medicine is constantly changing. The student will find this volume an excellent place to embark upon the study of disease; the practicing physician will find many delightful hours in reliving much of his former medical experience in the light of changing concepts of disease causation by the study of this volume, and his practice and approach to clinical problems will thereby be enriched. The reviewer recommends the book, is happy to keep it on his shelf for reference work, and enjoys browsing through it when leisure time invites creative reflections about pathology and medicine.